بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الورد العام للطريقة الهاشمية الدرقاوية الشاذلية

يقولُ المُريدُ صَباحاً ومَساءً:

أعوذُ باللهِ مِن الشّيطانِ الرّجيم (١)

بسمِ اللهِ الرّحمنِ الرّحيم (٣)

وما تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ اللهِ هُو خَيراً وأَعْظَمَ أَجْراً، و اسْتَغْفِرُوا اللهَ إنّ اللهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيم (١)

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ (٩٩)

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ العَظِيمَ الّذي لا إله إلّا هُوَ الحَيَّ القَيُّومَ وأَتُوبُ إلَيْه (١)

إنَّ اللهَ ومَلائِكتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يا أيُّها الّذِيْن آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيْماً (١)

اللّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنا مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِكَ ورَسُولِكَ النَّبِيِّ الأُمِّيِّ وعَلى آلِهِ وصَحْبِهِ وسَلِّم (٩٩)

اللّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنا مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِكَ ورَسُولِكَ النَّبِيِّ الأُمِّيِّ وعَلى آلِهِ وصَحْبِهِ وسَلِّم تَسْلِيماً بِقَدْرِ عَظَمَةِ ذاتِك في كُلِّ وَقْتٍ وحِيْن (١)

فاعْلَمْ أنّه لا إله إلاّ الله (١)

لا إله إلاّ اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لا شَرِيْكَ لَهُ، لَهُ المُلْكُ ولَهُ الحَمْدُ وهُوَ عَلى كُلِّ شَيءٍ قَدِير (١٠٠) وإذا مسّتْ إليه الحاجةُ فلا بَأْسَ بالاقْتِصار على (لا إله إلا الله) (١٠٠)

وبعدَ تمامِ المئةِ يقول : لا إله إلا اللهُ سيِّدُنَا محمَّدٌ رسُولُ الله، صلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْه وعَلى آلِهِ وصَحْبِهِ وسَلَّم(١)

سورة الإخلاص (٣)

الفاتحة (١)

ثمّ يدعو لنفسِه ولأبويه ولأشْياخه ولجميع المُسلمين وللفقراء الصوفية والدراويش، وعلينا جميعاً بالمُحافظة على الصّلاة وبِرِّ الوالدين وبالنّصح لكلّ مُسلم ؛ نحن أصبحنا إخوانا في الله؛ الناجي منّا يأخذُ بيد أخيه.

والحمد لله رب العالمين.

I

THE WIRD OF THE TARIQA

THE disciple says, morning and evening:

A'ūdhu bi-Llāhi min ash-Shayṭāni r-Rajīm ["I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Devil"] one time.

Bismi Llāhi r-Raḥmāni r-Raḥīm ["In the Name of Allah, Most Merciful and Compassionate"] three times.

Then one recites the Word of Allah Most High *Wa mā tuqaddimū li anfusikum min khayrin tajidūhū 'inda Llāhi huwa khayran wa a'ḍhama ajra(n), wa staghfiru Llāh(a), inna Llāha ghafūrur raḥīm* ["Whatever good you send ahead for yourselves you shall find is better and greater in reward with Allah; And ask Allah's forgiveness, Verily Allah is Oft-forgiving and Compassionate"] once; Then one says, *Astaghfiru Llāh* ["I ask Allah's forgiveness"] ninety-nine times, and on the hundredth time, *Astaghfiru Llāha l-'Aḍhīma lladhī lā ilāha illa huwa al-Ḥayya l-Qayyūma wa atūbu ilayh* ["I ask the forgiveness of Allah Most Great, whom there is no god besides, the Living, Through Whom All Subsists, and I repent unto Him"].

Then one recites the Word of Allah Most High *Inna Llāha wa malā'ikatahū yuṣallūna 'ala n-Nabiyy(i); Yā ayyuha lladhīna āmanū ṣallū 'alayhī wa sallimū taslīmā* ["Verily Allah and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who believe: bless him and invoke peace upon him"] once.

Then one says, *Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Sayyidinā Muḥammadin 'abdika wa rasūlika n-Nabiyyi l-Ummiyy(i), wa 'alā ālihī wa Ṣaḥbihī wa sallim* ["O Allah, bless our liegelord Muhammad, Your servant and messenger, the Unlettered Prophet, and his folk and Companions, and grant them peace"] ninety-nine times, and on the hundredth, *Allāhumma ṣalli 'alā Sayyidinā Muḥammadin 'abdika wa rasūlika n-Nabiyyi l-Ummiyy(i), wa 'alā ālihī wa ṣaḥbihī wa sallim taslīman bi qadri*

ʿaḍhamati dhātika fī kulli waqtin wa ḥīn ["O Allah, Bless our liegelord Muhammad, Your servant and messenger, the Unlettered Prophet, and his folk and Companions, and grant them peace, as greatly as the greatness of Your being, at every moment and time"].

Then one recites the Word of Allah Most High *Faʿlam annahū lā ilāha illa Llāh* ["So know that there is no god but Allah"] once, and then, *Lā ilāha illa Llāhu waḥdahū lā sharīka lah(u), lahu l-mulku wa lahu l-ḥamdu wa huwa ʿalā kulli shayʾin qadīr* ["There is no god but Allah alone, without partner, His is the dominion, His the praise, He has power over everything"] one hundred times (though if necessary, one may confine oneself simply to *Lā ilāha illa Llāh* ["There is no god but Allah"] a hundred times), and after the hundredth: *Lā ilāha illa Llāhu, Sayyidunā Muḥammadun rasūlu Llāh(i), Ṣalla Llāhu ʿalayhi wa ʿalā ālihī wa ṣaḥbihī wa sallam* ["There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Allah bless him and his folk and Companions and give them peace"].

Then one recites *Surat al-Ikhlas* (Qur'an 112) three times, and finishes by reciting the Fatiha once.

Then one prays for oneself, one's parents, one's sheikhs, one's brothers and sisters in the tariqa, and all Muslims. All of us are obliged to diligently perform the prayer, honor our parents, and give sincere counsel to every Muslim. We have become brethren in Allah. He of us who is saved must take his brother by the hand.

II

TRAVELLING

THE Sufi path is not a way of words but of work. Its aim is to change one's soul and life to conform to the Divine. The strongest means for this change are *dhikr* or 'remembrance of Allah,' *mudhakara* or learning from one's sheikh, and *jihad al-nafs* or overcoming the self. If one is doing these things, one is travelling the path. If one is not, one has stopped.

Dhikr

By having taken the tariqa, one is authorized to recite at one's discretion any of the *wird*s of the masters of the path one wishes that are found in *Awrad al-Tariqa al-Shadhiliyya* (*Invocations of the Shadhili Order*). Although the *bay'a* of the tariqa only necessitates reciting the general litany, six are recited by many *murid*s:

(1) The *Wird al-'Amm* or General Litany of the tariqa, which is recited by everyone morning and night. It is recited 'to oneself,' meaning whispered so that one can hear it oneself but others cannot.

(2) The Supreme Name "Allah," recited sixty-six times aloud in a quiet but audible voice before going to sleep at night, drawing out the final *a* and bringing up the final *h* from the chest.

(3) A *juz'* or thirtieth part of the Qur'an, as Bukhari relates that the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) told a questioner to "recite the Qur'an in a month." If one cannot, then a half a *juz'* a day is acceptable, and if not even that, a page or two is better than nothing. Women in their period should recite a daily part of the *Dala'il al-khayrat* of Imam Jazuli.

(4) *Hizb al-Bahr* by Abul Hasan al-Shadhili (Allah be well pleased with him), which is recited to oneself when alone, aloud with others. Hanafi women in their period, for all *wird*s, should recite the Qur'anic

parts silently in their hearts, while Shafi'i women may recite everything aloud.

(5) The *Wadhifa* or Abul Mawahib al-Tunisi's and Dhafir al-Madani's interlineal prayer upon Ibn Mashish's famous Blessing on the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace). The short form is to recite it up to the words in the middle: *A'udhu bi kalimati Llahi al-tammati min sharri ma khalaq* (I take refuge in the consummate words of Allah from the evil of what He has created); while the full form is to recite it to the end.

(6) The *Dala'il al-Khayrat,* Muhammad al-Jazuli's celebrated manual of Blessings on the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace. One should recite some of it each day, according to one's time. There is great baraka in it.

If one desires a seventh daily dhikr, it is valuable particularly at the end of the *wird al-'amm* to recite the short form of the *Latifiyya* (129 times) described in the *Awrad* book.

Mudhakara or Sufi Instruction

The teachings of one's sheikh are the mirror in which one sees oneself and one's progress in the path, and those who leave their house without looking at the mirror often appear strange. In this-worldly matters one should always compare oneself to those less fortunate than oneself, while in religious matters—and this is the function of *mudhakara*—one should compare oneself to those above one: the prophets, the Sahaba, and the *awliya* (Allah bless them one and all).

Our manual *Sea Without Shore* contains a fairly detailed written description of the path, though *mudhakara* is traditionally a spoken medium. The most important lesson is that of the Latifiyya, which is sent to every one of our gatherings in the world the same week it is given in the zawiya in Amman. A number of whole books have been taught and recorded at the zawiya on tapes and CDs. One can obtain them from others, or can download sound files of *suhba*s and other lessons from Sidi Hamid's shadhiliteachings.com. The ones to begin with are the "1998 Virginia Suhba." One should listen to fifteen or twenty minutes a week with the intention to learn and to change for the sake of

Allah. One can find answers to *fiqh* questions at sunnipath.com, while anti-Wahhabi and articles of general interest about Sufism and Islam may be found at shadhilitariqa.com, which serves as a general introduction of our tariqa to the public.

The best *mudhakara* is sitting with one's sheikh while he is teaching, whether by going to visit him in Jordan or meeting him with others at the *suhba*s. Whoever spends and sacrifices and travels will find *baraka* in his path, while whoever stays home while able to go will find himself becoming stale and filled with *wasawis* or 'neurotic misgivings' before his very eyes. The same is true of the *Latifiyya*s in one's area: when the intention is there, any gathering that has the permission of the sheikh will be a session of *baraka*. Ibn 'Ajiba notes that the path of *suluk* or spiritual development is not the way of solitude, but "gathering, listening, following, and benefiting." We do not go to the dhikrs and specifically Sufi gatherings of other sheikhs, though anyone may come to ours. As for public religious lectures and programs, the *madad* or 'spiritual help' in them is not very great, but if one needs a faith event to socialize at, one may go.

Jihad al-Nafs

The *tarbiya* or 'education' of Sufis consists in starting with people as they are and bringing them step by step to the desired point. To accomplish this we have a series of *muraqaba* or 'self observation' lessons of graduated difficulty, whose purpose is to free our lives from the *makruh* and the *haram*. They have teeth, and everyone who has done them has benefited. The end point, in which sins almost never happen, is necessary for the *dhikr* to have its full effect. The first of them is Lesson One, the Forty Grand, which is described in the pages below.

When one is doing these three things, the tariqa gives what it has to give. If one is not, one's tariqa is in danger of becoming mere talk. When Sheikh 'Adel was once asked about the reality of the tariqa, he rolled up his sleeve and said, "You, and your arm."

III

LESSON ONE
THE FORTY GRAND

If one plants an orchard on a chemical dump without first digging it out and replacing it with good soil, it will produce poisonous fruit. Similarly, the spiritual traveller who harbors vile character in his heart cannot go very far in the path until he addresses it. This lesson works on two key fundamentals of *akhlaq* or "good character": establishing the prayer and holding one's temper. It consists in forty days in a row of doing these two things.

I. During this lesson (and each of the subsequent *muraqaba* lessons), if one delays any of the five obligatory prayers (including *witr,* if one is Hanafi) past its valid time by, for example, sleeping through the dawn prayer until sunrise—unless there is a valid excuse such as one's monthly period or joining two prayers for travel or rain—it immediately vitiates the forty days and one must return to begin them again from day one, and then finish from there. Its ongoing relation to subsequent lessons is explained in the last section of this lesson.

II. The same is true of showing anger towards others for the sake of one's *nafs* or "ego," which also vitiates the forty days, and necessitates they be begun again and finished out in a row. Now, anger is part of the human soul which Allah has created with a divine wisdom, and this lesson is not vitiated by using it in its proper place, such as in jihad against the enemies of Allah to render His Word paramount; or jihad against one's spiritual enemies: the ego (nafs), caprice (hawa), this world (dunya), the Devil; or jihad against the bad and false (batil) when one's intention is purely for Allah. This lesson is only vitiated by anger that is unacceptable by the standards of Sacred Law and hence the spiritual path.

From ancient times, sages have observed that "anger buys what it

wants at the price of soul," and tantrums have always been regarded as the opposite of spirituality. In an earlier day, what was termed "rage" in men was called "hysteria" in women, while in modern times some manifestations of it have been dignified with names like "road-rage." When the smoke clears however, the problem is much the same: people who think it is acceptable to act like spoiled brats.

Islam does not accept this. Imam Ibn Hajar al-Haytami has listed "anger for the sake of one's ego" as an enormity in *al-Zawajir,* his work on major sins. A man came to the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) and said, "Advise me." He replied, "Be not angry." The man repeated himself several times, but the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) only said: "Be not angry" (*Bukhari,* 8.35: 6116. s).

The ulema of Sacred Law interpret this hadith figuratively, as meaning to refrain from the bad consequences of anger; namely, saying or doing what comes to mind when angry. This is the work of this lesson. The sheikhs of the path however, interpret the hadith literally, saying that the cause of anger for the sake of the ego is arrogance (kibr), which is itself unlawful, and one of the most imperative of things to get rid of in the spiritual path.

To do this, one must be able to discern whether one's anger is for oneself and one's ego, as is common, or is for the sake of Allah or one's fellow man, as is rare. Only anger for the sake of Allah or one's fellow man is acceptable during this lesson, while anger for oneself and one's ego, if one exceeds the bounds, interrupts the lesson and necessitates beginning again. The outward signs of anger for the ego that breaks the continuity of this lesson may be summarized in the following guidelines and examples, from which similar cases may be judged.

Things that Break the Forty Grand if Done Three Times

(1) The Forty Grand is broken by three separate occurrences of verbal anger within forty days, "verbal anger" for the purposes of this lesson meaning raising one's voice more than four sentences. As soon as one begins a fifth sentence with a raised voice, flushed face, or threatening or indignant manner, it is an instance of verbal anger. Its first occurrence in forty days is a warning from Allah to control oneself. The second is

one's last chance. The third vitiates the lesson.

—Nagging or scolding also constitutes a single occurrence of "verbal anger" if accompanied by a raised voice, vehemence, or angry recriminations—but not if it is mere low-key whining, though the latter is effeminate and unbecoming from men, useless and annoying from women, and almost always detrimental to the affection and respect that should exist between two people, whether husband and wife, or parent and child.

—When one is debating or contesting a point with someone at work, home, or other venue in which an occasional debate is customary and serves a genuine purpose, some excitedness is normal, and does not amount to an instance of "verbal anger" in such circumstances unless it results in impugning the other's person, as opposed to his mistaken words or beliefs or actions. Impugning the reason why someone is saying something does not vitiate the lesson if it is significant to the discussion and done without vehemence or rancor.

—If one has been wronged by someone and is angrily "getting it off one's chest" to a third party, then if there is no palpable benefit or improvement that the listener is capable of rendering besides listening, it is slander (ghiba), and as such is unlawful (haram) and necessitates repentance, though it does not break the forty days unless the person being badly talked about is actually present.

(2) The lesson is broken by three occurrences of anger that results in insult, ridicule, shouting, vituperation, cutting remarks, taunts, gibes, quarrelling, lying accusations, unfair exaggerations, angrily honking one's horn, or slamming doors,.

(3) Disciplining or raising one's voice at children or others under one's authority only constitutes an instance of "anger" (of which three break the Forty Grand) when done out of anger for the sake of the ego; as for example, when purely out of indignation at an affront to one's authority, or similar egotistical motive. It does *not* vitiate the forty days if done sincerely for their sake, or the general betterment of the state or situation. For example, if a mother is angry and yells at her son because he might hurt himself by doing the like of it, this would not break the lesson, because it is for the child's sake, not her own. If her motive is mixed, but at least *some* of it is for the child's welfare, it also does not

break the lesson. It is only broken by purely self-centered anger.

(4) The same applies to standing up in anger, when necessary, to a bullying supervisor, husband, wife, or other: it must be intended, at least in part, for *their* good, or to improve the situation, not merely to vindicate oneself or put the other person in their place. To decide what one's motive was, here or in (3) above, one must look carefully at what was in one's heart at the moment the action came to mind.

(5) Whenever the unacceptable occurrences of anger mentioned in (1), (2), (3), or (4) add up together to three times during a forty-day period, they break the lesson.

Things That Break the Forty Grand Immediately

(6) The Forty Grand is also vitiated by a *single* occurrence of such things as angrily breaking or throwing or destroying things, blows, vulgarity, cursing, spitting, or other typical elements of tantrums. Or refusing to talk to someone out of anger and not making up and returning to civil words within twenty-four hours if they live in the same house, or three days if they live elsewhere. Or deliberately harming another's person or property, whether outwardly angry or not. Or deliberately doing something that they take great offense at, such as walking out or hanging up on them.

Curing One's Anger Problem

The following measures should be used to eliminate bad temper:

(a) Feel disgust at the antics of the *nafs* for having committed an act of disobedience to Allah for the sake of nothing.

(b) Sincerely ask Allah's help in overcoming anger. The sunna is to say *A'udhu bi Llahi min ash-Shaytani r-Rajim* (I take refuge in Allah from the accursed Devil). Abu Madyan has said, "Whoever does not seek Allah's help against his ego will be thrown by it." It is also of the sunna to make ablution (wudu) if angry; or if walking, to stand still; or if standing, to sit down; or sitting, to lie back.

(c) Implacably persist in this lesson. Return to it again and again until you have the *nafs* in hand and can control it: eventually it will give up. If one pretends to be cool-headed and persists in pretending to be so, Allah

eventually disposes the heart to be that way. For centuries, Sufis have used such *takalluf* or "pretending" to first imitate, then approximate, and then attain the qualities they have sought.

(d) Put *baraka* in your life by eating halal food from the work of your own hands. The best food is that which you or your family prepare. Eat at least one meal daily together as a family at home. Eat the food of the righteous. Restaurants and fast food daub the heart with *nafs* and *dunya,* and should only be used as a last resort, such as when travelling and one cannot take food from home, or for business meetings, or when relatives are having a "function," or one's wife is exhausted or fed-up and needs a break from cooking, or guests arrive unexpectedly and no food has been prepared—or similar unpremeditated cases that are *not* for the food or mere socializing. When forced by such circumstances, it is sufficient that the food be *halal,* and that one say "Bismi Llah" over it.

Otherwise, when one sees tariqa members, even long-term, eating by preference at restaurants, one should pray for them, because they just don't get it. Food prepared in forgetfulness of Allah causes forgetfulness of Allah. How many a *murid* has stumbled because of food, not knowing what hit him. How many a *murid* has stayed the same for years because he ignored the basics. There is such a thing as *baraka* in food. Everyone knows that unslaughtered meat is *haram* to eat, but one should realize how little *baraka* there is in even slaughtered meat when the animals have been raised in misery and suffering, or when it was cooked by those of low and vile character. One should be aware of what one is doing to oneself. At a merely physical level, fried foods and salty foods angry up the blood.

The Relation of the Forty Grand to Future Muraqaba Lessons

While engaged in any lesson from Lesson Two through Lesson Six, if one vitiates the Forty Grand during the lesson, for example by missing any prayer that is *fard* or *wajib* (the latter meaning the *witr* of Hanafis) or exceeding the bounds of anger, this immediately vitiates the lesson that one is on. In such a case, one must return to repeat the Forty Grand—while at the same time praying *salat al-tawba* for any of the

seven sins that happen during the Forty—after which one begins again the lesson that one was on when one vitiated the Forty Grand. If one were working on Lesson Three, for example, and one vitiated the Forty Grand, one would have to go back and repeat the Forty Grand and then start Lesson Three over again from the *first day of Lesson Three*. The reverse, however, is not true: vitiating the lesson that one is on, for example, by spoiling Lesson Two with one of the seven things, does not vitiate the Forty Grand, but only necessitates going back to the first day of Lesson Two. To say it again, vitiating the Forty Grand during any lesson necessitates repeating the Forty Grand and then starting that particular lesson over again, but vitiating a lesson does not necessitate repeating the Forty Grand.

When One Finishes the First Time

Please contact the sheikh when you have accomplished the forty days in a row for the first time, give the date on which you did so, and request Lesson Two. Contact is possible by personally visiting, or by email at water@sheikhnuh.com from the 15th to the 25th of each month, or by telephone at [009626] 515-3904 on Sunday evenings from sunset prayer (maghrib) to nightfall prayer ('isha), or by mail at P.O. Box 183479, Amman 11118 Jordan. Continue with this lesson until you receive the next one. Through Allah's help and grace, may our task be blessed with *tawfiq*.

IV

THE WOMAN

A MAN was walking through the marketplace one afternoon when, just as the muezzin began the call to prayer, his eye fell on a woman's back. She was strangely attractive, though dressed in fulsome black, a veil over head and face, and she now turned to him as if somehow conscious of his over-lingering regard, and gave him a slight but meaningful nod before she rounded the corner into the lane of silk sellers. As if struck by a bolt from heaven, the man was at once drawn, his heart a prisoner of that look, forever. In vain he struggled with his heart, offering it one sound reason after another to go his way—wasn't it time to pray?—but it was finished: there was nothing but to follow.

He hastened after her, turning into the market of silks, breathing from the exertion of catching up with the woman, who had unexpectedly outpaced him and even now lingered for an instant at the far end of the market, many shops ahead. She turned toward him, and he thought he could see a flash of a mischievious smile from beneath the black muslin of her veil, as she—was it his imagination?—beckoned to him again.

The poor man was beside himself. Who was she? The daughter of a wealthy family? What did she want? He requickened his steps and turned into the lane where she had disappeared. And so she led him, always beyond reach, always tantalizingly ahead, now through the weapons market, now the oil merchants', now the leather sellers'; farther and farther from where they began. The feeling within him grew rather than decreased. Was she mad? On and on she led, to the very edge of town.

The sun declined and set, and there she was, before him as ever. Now they were come, of all places, to the City of Tombs. Had he been in his

normal senses, he would have been afraid, but indeed, he now reflected, stranger places than this had seen a lovers' tryst.

There were scarcely twenty cubits between them when he saw her look back, and, giving a little start, she skipped down the steps and through the great bronze door of what seemed to be a very old sepulcher. A soberer moment might have seen the man pause, but in his present state, there was no turning back, and he went down the steps and slid in after her.

Inside, as his eyes saw after a moment, there were two flights of steps that led down to a second door, from whence a light shone, and which he equally passed through. He found himself in a large room, somehow unsuspected by the outside world, lit with candles upon its walls. There sat the woman, opposite the door on a pallet of rich stuff in her full black dress, still veiled, reclining on a pillow against the far wall. To the right of the pallet, the man noticed a well set in the floor.

"Lock the door behind you," she said in a low, husky voice that was almost a whisper, "and bring the key."

He did as he was told.

She gestured carelessly at the well. "Throw it in."

A ray of sense seemed to penetrate for a moment the clouds over his understanding, and a bystander, had there been one, might have detected the slightest of pauses.

"Go on," she said laughingly, "You didn't hesitate to miss the prayer as you followed me here, did you?"

He said nothing.

"The time for sunset prayer has almost finished as well," she said with gentle mockery. "Why worry? Go on, throw it in. You want to please me, don't you?"

He extended his hand over the mouth of the well, and watched as he let the key drop. An uncanny feeling rose from the pit of his stomach as moments passed but no sound came. He felt wonder, then horror, then comprehension.

"It is time to see me," she said, and she lifted her veil to reveal not the face of a fresh young girl, but of a hideous old crone, all darkness and vice, not a particle of light anywhere in its eldritch lines.

"See me well," she said. "My name is *Dunya,* This World. I am your

beloved. You spent your time running after me, and now you have caught up with me. In your grave. Welcome, welcome."

At this she laughed and laughed, until she shook herself into a small mound of fine dust, whose fitful shadows, as the candles went out, returned to the darkness one by one.

V

WRITING EMAILS TO THE SHEIKH

(1) The sheikh receives emails from the 15th to the 25th of each month only. One's intention in writing should be sincerely for Allah, by repenting and turning from all sins and asking Allah to benefit one by what one hears. One should listen first to the recorded *mudhakara* lessons, for they contain the answers to most questions.

(2) One's full name and city should be on every email. Those who have been out of touch for a long time should mention when and where they first took the tariqa. In order to be answered, all emails must contain the sender's first and last name, email address and phone number, country and city, may contain no more than three questions, and may not exceed 400 words. Letters should be brief and to the point. They should be spelled correctly and not use tacky abbreviations like "u" for "you" to save a few finger motions.

(3) It is wrong to refrain from contacting the sheikh merely to conceal one's mistakes. To err is human. If hesitating whether to write, one probably should. Questions should be about the path to Allah. Particular questions or theological issues should have a practical bearing on one's *din* or spiritual life. One should resist the temptation to use the sheikh and the path to improve one's *dunya*, except when absolutely necessary for one's peace of mind, survival, or next world.

(4) Wars between family and in-laws with jinn, magic, or anything else are not *suluk* matters. Merely being in a tariqa and reciting one's *wird*s protects one from the effects of magic, which are generally in inverse proportion to one's *iman*. The Qur'an itself tells us that the Devil has no authority over those who are true servants and rely (tawakkul) upon their Lord (16:99). If one wants to be protected from everything, one should recite the last three suras of the Qur'an in

order, three times in the morning and three times at night, as is well authenticated from the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace). Indeed, the last two suras were revealed to protect believers from dark influences. *Ayat al-Kursi* is recited for protection at night before going to bed. There is also protection in reciting the *Wadhifa*.

(5) It is not necessary to write every so often "just to keep in touch." The sheikh and student are already in touch by belonging to the tariqa, reciting the *Wird al-'Amm,* and praying for each other. If one is thankful for Allah's blessings, praying on time, reciting one's *wird*s, listening to the *mudhakara,* doing one's *muraqaba* lessons, not polluting the *ruh* with filth, attending the gatherings of the tariqa and *suhba*s, and not wronging oneself or others—then things are going as they should, and one should wait until something comes up. One can know whether Allah loves one by looking at one's practice of the *din*.

(6) Do not write the sheikh more than once a month unless in trouble. One can not expect the sheikh to follow along with one's daily events, weekly updates on one's mother-in-law, or how each meeting goes with one's prospective bride or groom. Give others a chance, and wait till next month to write again.

(7) For over fifty years Mawlay al-'Arabi al-Darqawi told *murid*s with complaints, "It's just your *nafs*." Most problems can be solved by *tawba*, prayer, *tawakkul,* giving generous *sadaqa*, and seeking Allah's guidance by *istikhara*. While one should ask the sheikh about particularly important things, it is sunna to act upon one's own *istikhara*s.

(8) If one has a chronic problem, one should think about coming to Jordan to address it with the sheikh in person. There are benefits in visiting one's *murshid* beyond merely exchanging information.

Addresses for Emails

WATER@SHEIKHNUH.COM is where the sheikh receives emails from the 15th to the 25th of each month.

ZAWIYA@SHEIKHNUH.COM is open all month for (a) handling technical problems in opening up a message from the sheikh, (b) appointments for new people to take the tariqa by phone, (c) updating the sheikh on one's location, email, or telephone number, (d) sending

Eid Greetings or Salams, or (e) general information such as lesson times at the zawiya, how to get lesson recordings, and so forth. All new members are requested to send a simple email containing their correct email address to zawiya@sheikhnuh.com as soon as they take the tariqa. It is handled by Mohamed Marei.

TRAVEL@SHEIKHNUH.COM is open all month for (a) making arrangements for coming to Jordan and accommodations, (b) information on whether the sheikh will be in Jordan at the time, and (c) other visit information. It is handled by Sidi Ihab. *Murid*s planning to visit already have the sheikh's invitation, and only need to contact Sidi Ihab.

FIQH@SHEIKHNUH.COM is open all month for Islamic legal questions that one faces about the *halal* and *haram* that are not directly connected to *muraqaba* lessons or *suluk*. It is handled by SunniPath, and their contacts among fiqh scholars and muftis of taqwa and learning. One should state the relevant facts of the case and one's *madhhab*.

MARRIAGE@SHEIKHNUH.COM is open all month for questions about (a) marriage problems and (b) marriage prospects. Sheikh Ashraf and Hedaya handle marriage issues at the sheikh's request because they (1) are older, (2) are good at keeping secrets, (3) have a long and successful marriage themselves, (4) have much experience in marriage counseling and follow-up, and (5) know the *din* and the tariqa. Marital advice without these qualifications often spoils more than it fixes. Before seeking counseling, it is beneficial to listen to the sheikh's advice on marriage in the recorded lessons, some of which has been gathered in the "Marriage for Allah" CDs. Most marital problems can be solved by good *akhlaq* and following the *sunna*.

Other useful websites in the tariqa include ShadhiliTeachings.com for recorded audio teachings, SunniPath.com on fiqh answers, and ShadhiliTariqa.com for other articles of general Islamic interest.

A special phone number, [001] (509) 279–0359, is available only for those who wish to take the tariqa from the sheikh on Mondays, between *Maghrib* and *'Isha* Jordan local time. All other calls without exception are to [009626] 515–3904 between *Maghrib* and *'Isha* Jordan time on Sunday evenings. And Allah alone gives success.

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